

A.C. Cuza

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Alexandru C. Cuza also **A.C. Cuza** (November 8, 1857 – 1947) was a Romanian professor of law and political economy as well as an anti-Semitic Christian nationalist politician. He is well-known particularly because of his association with Nicolae Paulescu as well as his influence on Corneliu Zelea Codreanu.



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Education

After attending secondary school in his city of birth, Iasi, and in Dresden, Cuza studied law at the University of Paris and later transferred to Université Libre de Bruxelles, where he took doctorates in political science and economy (1881), as well as law (1882).^[1]

Early Political Activity

While in Brussels, Cuza had contact with two Romanian socialists, Constantin Mille and Basil G. Morțun, whose circle he briefly joined upon returning to Romania. Later, however, he departed from the socialists and became a Conservative. Cuza then joined the literary society *Junimea* and contributed to its magazine, *Convorbiri Literare* ("Literary Discussions"), and in 1890 served as deputy mayor of Iasi. Two years later, he was elected into the Parliament, representing the Conservative Party, from 1892 to 1895.^[2]

However, he eventually left conservative politics and decided to start activities for the improvement of Romania on his own. He worked with the historian A. D. Xenopol to create the *Liga contra alcoolismului* ("The League Against Alcoholism") and its magazine, *Biblioteca Ligii contra alcoolismului* ("Library League Against Alcoholism").^[3]

A.C. Cuza became a professor at the University of Iasi in 1901. In a few years he began working with the famous professor Nicolae Iorga, first in 1905 by working on the newspaper *Neamul Românesc* ("Romanian People"), and later in 1910 the two founded the Democratic Nationalist Party. In 1912, they established the party's paper *Unirea* ("Union"), and by 1914 Cuza was making speeches advocating land reform for the peasants and universal suffrage. However, eventually in a few years he broke from his partnership with Iorga because of disagreements on how to deal with the Jewish Problem.^[4]

"Nationality in Art"

One of Cuza's books, *Naționalitatea în artă* ("Nationality in Art"), which was published in 1908, was an influential work among Christian nationalist anti-Semites in Romania, especially by the 1920s and 30s, when the professor of theology Nichifor Crainic praised it.^[5] This work explained how culture, especially the arts, is ultimately the creation of nationality or the ethnic soul. In here Cuza declared that "A nation is all the individuals of same blood, forming by their cohesion a natural related collective being with its own organs and state which are social classes and the State and the same soul, which is nationality..." and that "Nationality is the creative power of human culture, culture is the creative power of nationality."^[6]

This book also discussed the distortion or destruction of a nation's culture due to the presence of a foreign ethnicity, such as the Jews. Cuza wrote extensively in this book on how Jews were the greatest threat to Romanian culture. One of his major points was on how Jews were racially different from Europeans, declaring that "Indo-European peoples and Semitic peoples are today still completely different... Jews almost everywhere form a special society." He also emphasized that because they believed themselves to be a racially superior "Chosen People" they would thus resist being assimilated into any other culture and at the same time be determined to subvert and change the culture of the peoples in whose nation they live in. As Cuza wrote, "Jewish morality fatally, has two morals from the same fundamental dogmas of the Jewish religion, considering themselves a 'chosen people' - and all other people as 'goyim' (Gentiles), unbelievers, inferior beings with no rights and related to animals. It results from this, the neighbor, for Jews, is only a Jew, which is the only one to which he has moral duties. But when compared to those of other faiths - no one. This concept is found clearly expressed in the Bible..."^[7]

"The Science of Anti-Semitism"

In 1922, Cuza, after having created a new organization with Nicolae Paulescu called the National Christian Union^[8], had written what is now his

most well-known work on the Jewish Problem because of its impact upon Romanian students at the time. This article, "The Science of Anti-Semitism", was published in the magazine *Apararea Nationala* ("The National Defense") in 1922 along with another article by Professor Paulescu. [9]

These two articles were so influential that Corneliu Codreanu wrote, in his book *For My Legionaries*, that "The articles of Professors Cuza and Paulescu were religiously read by all the youth and had everywhere upon students both in Bucharest and in Cluj a resounding impact. We considered the publication of each issue a triumph, because it was for us another munitions transport for combating the arguments in the Jewish press." [10]

In his article "The Science of Anti-Semitism" Cuza discussed how anti-Semitism was not a "madness" as Jews and philosemites argue, but a natural reaction to the negative presence of Jews which can even be scientific once the Jews and their behavior are studied scientifically. He remarked in this article that "As for the Jews, their explanation of anti-Semitism is more characteristic yet. In addition to the usual cliché, 'with hatred and savagery' - naturally with no motive, they do not care to discuss motives - according to them, anti-Semitism is a madness, an intellectual degeneration, an affliction of the spirit..." [11] and then listed out respectable and cultured people throughout history who were opposed to Jews in their nations:

"It was this *savagery and madness* which darkened the understanding of the most prominent representatives of the culture of all nations, such as Cicero, Seneca, Tacitus, Mohamed, Martin Luther, Giordano Bruno, Frederick the Great, Voltaire, Josef II, Napoleon I, Goethe, Herder, Immanuel Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, Charles Fournier, Ludwig Feuerbach, Richard Wagner, Bismarck, Rudolf Virchow, Theodor Billroth, Eugen Dühring - and countless others in all fields to come out against the Jews. *Savagery and madness*, finally, explains the anti-Semitism of the most distinguished representatives of our culture, such as Simion Barnutiu, B.P. Hajdau, Vasile Alecsandri, Vasile Conta, Mihail Eminescu." [12]

Upon listing these people, Cuza then exclaimed: "And the venality of those Judaized is incapable of explaining anti-Semitism as a social phenomenon..." He then proceeded to summarize his findings on the Jews after studying them intellectually, explaining "The science of anti-Semitism has as its object Judaism as a social problem, being thus, necessarily, the synthesis of all sciences that can contribute to its solution." Finally, after giving an overview of his studies, he concluded that "The science of anti-Semitism finally comes to explain this phenomenon, enlightening further the consciousness of people, fully satisfying their instinct and its violent eruptions thus legitimized by revealing their cause - the parasitism of the Jews. Thus it gives us the formula of the scientific solution for the problem of Judaism, which in order to realize we have only to apply." [13]

Later Political Activity

While doing activism with Paulescu for the National Christian Union, Cuza was a mentor to Corneliu Codreanu along with many other nationalist students such as Ion Mota. By March, 1923 Cuza and Codreanu then established the *Liga Apărării naționale Creștine* or "National Christian Defense League" (L.A.N.C.), which was the major anti-Jewish nationalist party across Romania and inspired students throughout many universities to make meetings and rallies. The party's banner used the swastika merged with the Romanian flag. [14]

In 1927, after a split had occurred in the L.A.N.C., and after Codreanu decided that Cuza's tactics of trying to work within the Parliament were hopeless, Codreanu split off and created his own group, the Legion of Michael the Archangel (which was eventually known as the Iron Guard). By the 1930s, the Legionaries and the L.A.N.C. got into violent clashes after tensions built up due to Cuza's decision that the Legion was a threat to his success and needed to be attacked verbally, but this eventually led to physical fights. By the late 1930s Cuza had acquired a significant position in the Romanian government, although ultimately he could not solve the Jewish Problem to the extent that he wished. By 1938, King Carol II dismissed the government officials including Cuza and Octavian Goga and established himself as dictator. It was in this situation that, after Codreanu's murder, the Iron Guard would eventually take power by force in 1940 under the leadership of Horia Sima and Ion Antonescu. [15]

Alexandru C. Cuza died in 1947 in Sibiu, after having seen the Romanian country he loved fall to Communism, and was buried in the Central Cemetery. [16]

Written Works

- *Generația de la 1848 și era nouă* ["The Generation of 1848 and what was new"] (1889)
- *Obiectul economiei politice și însemnătatea ei* ["The Subject of Political Economy and its Importance"] (1901)
- *Naționalitatea în artă* ["Nationality in Art"] (1908)
- *Scăderea populației creștine și înmulțirea jidanilor* ["The Decrease in Christian Population and the Multiplication of Jews"] (1911)
- *Doctrina naționalistă creștină* ["The Nationalist Christian Doctrine"] (1924)
- *Învățătura lui Iisus, iudaismul și teologia creștină* ["The Teachings of Jesus, Judaism and Christian Theology"] (1925)
- *Mișcările studențești și cauzele lor* ["Student Movements and their Causes"] (1925)
- *Agricoltura și industria în România* ["Agriculture and Industry in Romania"] (1927)
- *Lupta pentru credință* ["The Fight for Faith"] (1928)
- *Studii economice-politice* ["Political Economic Studies"] (1930)

References

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3. ↑ Biography of A.C. Cuza with Bibliography at ac-cuza.info (<http://ac-cuza.info/biografie/>)
4. ↑ Biography of A.C. Cuza with Bibliography at ac-cuza.info (<http://ac-cuza.info/biografie/>)

5. ↑ Crainic, Nichifor, "Naționalitatea în Artă," *Gîndirea* ("Thought"), March 1935
6. ↑ *Naționalitatea în artă* ("Nationality in Art") (<http://www.archive.org/details/NationalitateInArta>) , București: Cartea Romaneasca, 1905.
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8. ↑ Ioanid, Radu. *The Sword of the Archangel*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.
9. ↑ A.C. Cuza, "Știința antisemitismului" ("The Science of Anti-Semitism") (http://www.archive.org/details/TheScienceOfAnti-semitism_761) , *Apararea Naționala* ("The National Defense") No. 16, Nov. 15, 1922, 1st year.
10. ↑ Codreanu, Corneliu Zelea. *For My Legionaries* (<http://www.archive.org/details/ForMyLegionariesTheIronGuard>) . Third Edition. Translated and edited by Dr. Dimitrie Gazdaru. York, SC: Liberty Bell Publications, 2003. Page 37.
11. ↑ A.C. Cuza, "Știința antisemitismului" ("The Science of Anti-Semitism") (http://www.archive.org/details/TheScienceOfAnti-semitism_761) , *Apararea Naționala* ("The National Defense") No. 16, Nov. 15, 1922, 1st year.
12. ↑ A.C. Cuza, "Știința antisemitismului" ("The Science of Anti-Semitism") (http://www.archive.org/details/TheScienceOfAnti-semitism_761) , *Apararea Naționala* ("The National Defense") No. 16, Nov. 15, 1922, 1st year.
13. ↑ A.C. Cuza, "Știința antisemitismului" ("The Science of Anti-Semitism") (http://www.archive.org/details/TheScienceOfAnti-semitism_761) , *Apararea Naționala* ("The National Defense") No. 16, Nov. 15, 1922, 1st year.
14. ↑ Biography of A.C. Cuza with Bibliography at ac-cuza.info (<http://ac-cuza.info/biografie/>)
15. ↑ Nagy-Talavera, Nicholas M. *The Green Shirts and the Others: A History of Fascism in Hungary and Rumania* . (Hoover Institution Press, 1970).
16. ↑ Biography of A.C. Cuza with Bibliography at ac-cuza.info (<http://ac-cuza.info/biografie/>)

External Links

- [AC-Cuza.Info](http://ac-cuza.info/) (<http://ac-cuza.info/>) - Romanian language website containing information about A.C. Cuza
- "Știința antisemitismului" de A.C. Cuza (<http://foaienationala.ro/a-c-cuza-stiinta-antisemitismului.html>) ("The Science of Anti-Semitism" article by A.C. Cuza in Romanian language)
- File of Cuza's "The Science of Anti-Semitism" article in English (http://www.archive.org/details/TheScienceOfAnti-semitism_761) on the Internet Archive
- *Naționalitatea în artă* (<http://ac-cuza.info/nationalitatea-in-arta/>) - Excerpts from Cuza's book *Nationality in Art* in Romanian online (HTML)
- Full book *Naționalitatea în artă* (<http://www.archive.org/details/NationalitateInArta>) at the Internet Archive.

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